



## **Human Relations Commission Prepares for 2<sup>nd</sup> Festival of Lights Indian Culture Celebration Expected to Sell Out Again**

**For Immediate Release:**

September 27, 2018

**WHITESTOWN, Ind.** – The Whitestown Human Relations Commission is proud to present its second Festival of Lights celebration and Indian food fair, which will take place Saturday, November 3<sup>rd</sup> from 6-9pm in the gymnasium of the Whitestown Municipal Complex.

“Last year’s event got a much larger than expected turnout.” explains Director of Public Relations, Tanya Sumner. “We expected to draw maybe a few dozen people to the first-time event. Instead, more than 800 people attended from communities all over Central Indiana.”

This year’s Festival of Lights will feature delicious food for sale from two restaurant vendors: Dhaba Indy and Tandoor & Tikka, which is owned by a Whitestown resident. Dhaba Indy will have meals for sale inside the gymnasium, while Tandoor & Tikka will have a food truck parked right outside the main lobby doors.

As attendees enter the main lobby, they will be given a traditional, Indian greeting, then be directed to a photo booth area where a photo of their family will be taken, if they wish. Inside the gymnasium will be beautiful, colorful, and graceful dance performances by professional Bharatanatyam and Yakshagana dance groups, Bollywood dance lessons, a singing performance, henna tattoos, crafts, and name lettering where attendees can have their names written in several Hindi languages as a keepsake. There will also be vendors selling authentic, handmade Indian goods like rangoli art, pooja thali plates, jewelry, baskets, Indian scarves, bags, and other accessories. The event will conclude with a colorful, ground fireworks display just outside the gymnasium doors in the north parking lot. Fireworks are an important part of the celebration, as the festival is celebrated to symbolize the victory of light over darkness and good over evil.

The Festival of Lights is free, but attendees are encouraged to register for the limited number of free tickets through Eventbrite at the following link, since organizers are expecting another sellout:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2018-whitestown-festival-of-lights-indian-food-fair-tickets-50443707487?aff=eac2>

Whitestown resident and local realtor Vishnu Koneru with RE/MAX Ability Plus is once again a Gold Level sponsor for the Festival of Lights, donating \$500 for the second year in a row to help cover the costs so that the event can remain free to attendees.

The goal of the Whitestown Human Relations Commission is to educate, and to embrace all of the different cultures in our quickly growing community. According to the latest U.S. Census Bureau statistics available, the Asian Indian population is Whitestown's fastest-growing demographic, more than doubling to 6.4% between 2010 and 2016.

"The Festival of Lights celebration allows us to capitalize on our growing diversity here in Whitestown and educate the community we live in on acceptance, regardless of race, nationality, religious beliefs, gender, or cultural differences. It's exciting to see so many people willing to engage and learn about Indian culture." says Human Relations Commission board member, Kisha Rollins.

**WHAT:** Whitestown Human Relations Commission Festival of Lights

**WHEN:** Saturday, November 3, 2018 from 6-9pm

**WHERE:** Whitestown Municipal Complex – 6210 Veterans Drive, Whitestown, IN 46075

### **About Whitestown**

Whitestown has been the fastest growing community in the state of Indiana for the past seven years in a row and has made Niche Magazine's Top 10 list of 'Best Places to Buy a Home' and 'Best Places to Raise a Family' for several years in a row.

In April 2015, Whitestown became the first of the communities in the donut counties surrounding Indianapolis to pass a Human Relations ordinance and create a Human Relations Commission to encourage inclusiveness and celebrate diversity.

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